

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10
L-03 NSAE-00 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 NSCE-00 SSO-00
INRE-00 TRSE-00 /052 W
-----050002 181935Z /40
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FM AMEMBASSY CARACAS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1623
USIA WASHDC IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L CARACAS 2646

E.O. 11652:GDS
TAGS: PINT VE
REF: (A) CARACAS 2574 (B) CARACAS 2597

SUBJECT: DIEGO ARRIA'S RESIGNATION ACCEPTED

1. GOVERNMENT PRESS OFFICE HAS ANNOUNCED THAT PRESIDENT PEREZ HAD ON MARCH 17 ACCEPTED THE RESIGNATION OF INFORMATION AND TOURISM MINISTER DIEGO ARRIAS WHICH LATTER HAD SUBMITTED IN FEBRUARY. THE PRESIDENT DESIGNATED AD PARTY REGULAR AND FEDERAL DEPUTY CELESTINO ARMAS TO REPLACE HIM. CELESTINO ARMAS IS BELIEVED TO BE CLOSE TO AND TRUSTED BY PEREZ.

2. ARRIA HAD TOLD THE AMBASSADOR PRIVATELY EARLIER (REFTEL A) THAT HE DID NOT PLAN TO LEAVE THE CABINET UNTIL AFTER PRESIDENT CARTER'S VISIT, AND THAT HE EXPECTED PRESIDENT PEREZ TO TRY AND TALK HIM OUT OF RUNNING FOR THE PRESIDENCY. YESTERDAY'S ACTION BY THE PRESIDENT INDICATES THAT ARRIA MAY HAVE MISREAD HIS HIS CAPACITY TO CONTROL THE CIRCUMSTANCES; PEREZ IN EFFECT TOOK THE INITIATIVE AND REPLACED ARRIA.

3. OVER THE PAST TWO WEEKS EMBASSY SOURCES HAVE REPORTED THAT A) THE AD PARTY ORGANIZATION'S PRESSURE AGAINST ARRIA WAS BECOMING CONFIDENTIAL

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SO THREAT THAT HE WOULD RESIGN SOON; AND B) THAT ARRIA HAD BEEN TELLING A NUMBER OF PEOPLE HE WAS ONCE AGAIN CONSIDERING RUNNING FOR THE PRESIDENCY AS AN INDEPENDENT (REFTEL B), AND CLAIMING TO HAVE BEEN IN CONTACT WITH PEOPLE PREPARED TO HELP HIS CANDIDACY. MARCH 18 MORNING'S PRESS REPORTS THAT AD PARTY MEMBERS HAD MADE A DEMARCHE TO THE PRESIDENT COMPLAINING THAT A MINISTER OF HIS CABINET SHOULD SO

OPENLY BE MAKING PLANS TO RUN AGAINST THE PARTY CANDIDATE.IT
APPEARS IN SHORT THAT THE GROWING PARTY PRESSURE TO GET RID OF ARRIA
COMBINED WITH THE PRESIDENT'S AND OTHER OFFICIALS' IRRATIATION AND
ANNOYANCE OF ARRIAS' PERSISTENT MANEUVERING TO FASHION AN INDEPENDENT
CANDIDACY FIALY MOVED THE PRESIDENT TO REPLACE HIM.FURTHER
ANALYSIS OF THIS SITUATION AND ITS RAMIFICATIONS FNOLLOWS.
VAKY

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NNN

Message Attributes

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